

and diaries, however, and while not revealing a specific plan or precise orders for expulsion, they provide overwhelming circumstantial evidence to show that a design was being implemented by the Haganah, and later by the IDF, to reduce the number of Arabs in the Jewish state to a minimum, and to make use of most of their lands, properties, and habitats to absorb the masses of Jewish immigrants.²⁶

It is true, of course, that many Palestinians left of their own accord. Tens of thousands of community leaders, businessmen, landowners, and members of the intellectual elite who had the means for removing their families from the scene of fighting did so. Thousands of others—government officials, professionals, and skilled workers—chose to immigrate to Arab areas rather than live in a Jewish state, where they feared unemployment and discrimination. Nearly half the Arab population of Haifa moved to Nazareth, Acre, Nablus, and Jenin before their city was captured by the Haganah on April 23, 1948. The Arab quarters of Wadi Nisnas and Karmel were almost completely emptied out. (This voluntary move to areas designated for the Arab state was interpreted by some observers as evidence that those leaving saw partition as irreversible and looked for ways to accommodate themselves to it.)²⁷

But hundreds of thousands of others, intimidated and terrorized, fled in panic, and still others were driven out by the Jewish army, which, under the leadership of Ben-Gurion, planned and executed the expulsion in the wake of the UN Partition Resolution.

The balance is clear in IDF intelligence estimates. As of June 1, 1948, 370,000 Arabs had left the country, from both the Jewish parts and the Arab parts conquered by the Jews. Jewish attacks on Arab centers, particularly large villages, townlets, or cities, accounted for about 55 percent of those who left; terrorist acts of the Irgun and LEHI, 15 percent; whispering campaigns (psychological warfare), about 2 percent; evacuation ordered by the IDF, another 2 percent; and general fear, about 10 percent. Therefore, 84 percent left in direct response to Israeli actions, while only 5 percent left on orders from Arab bands. The remaining 11 percent are not accounted for in this estimate and may refer to those who left voluntarily. (The total reflects only about 50 percent of the entire exodus since a similar number were to leave the country within the next six months.)²⁸

Again, it is obvious that no specific orders for expulsion could have been issued. All of the Zionist movement's official pronouncements as well as those of the provisional government and, after January 1949, the Israeli government—and Ben-Gurion was prominent